



Sahabat Alam Malaysia
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For Environmental Justice

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Press Statement

24 May 2021

Stop the culling of wildlife

Sahabat Alam Malaysia is deeply shocked and disturbed by the recent shooting of a family of 20 dusky langurs (*Trachypithecus obscurus*) in Port Dickson, Negeri Sembilan on 20 May 2021 by the Negeri Sembilan Jabatan Perhilitan (wildlife department). SAM was alerted to a social media post uploaded by a person named Nurul Azreen Sultan about this incident that went viral bringing attention to the public and media. In the post, one of the reasons cited by the officers of the wildlife department for the culling of the 20 dusky langurs was that there was human-wildlife conflict.

The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species has classified these dusky langurs as endangered species while our Wildlife Conservation Act 2010 has categorised them as protected species. Further, s. 86 of the Wildlife Conservation Act 2010 states that a person commits an offence when he or she is wilfully cruel to any wildlife and is liable to a fine or imprisonment or both. On the face of it, this seems like a cruel act of killing by the wildlife department.

SAM is appalled by the cruel method used by the wildlife department in killing a whole family of 20 dusky langurs at one go and allegedly with baby langurs too without taking into account if they were really the cause for the conflict. SAM questions the wildlife department whether their standard operating procedure is to shoot to kill first without proper investigation or without thinking through the process. The witness in this incident had also mentioned that there was an incident that took place a few months ago but it may have been caused by a group of macaques and not these dusky langurs. If it indeed was an incident of conflict that took place a few months ago, the wildlife department would have had time to mount an investigation and find a more humane solution to the conflict rather than killing 20 of this endangered species.

The wildlife department has in its recent social media posts proudly stated they are running rehabilitation programmes for many wildlife species including gibbons. They even forcefully removed six gibbons that were undergoing years of rehabilitation from the Gibbons Rehabilitation Project (GRoP) in Pahang early this year citing that the gibbons were better off under their care; and then they went ahead and mercilessly shot 20 dusky langurs without any thought of trauma inflicted to both the wildlife and humans living in the surrounding area.

SAM is very concerned about the rate of biodiversity loss in this country and this include our wildlife. If the government does not begin to care about our wildlife and especially these endangered species, soon we will not have any left for the next generation. It is well known that dusky langurs are arboreal primates who dwell in tall trees in dense forests. They are social animals that live in groups and rarely come in contact with humans. The fact that these langurs have been seen near human settlement could be due to the loss of their original habitat, a conflict first caused by humans in the name of development.

Instead of employing cruel methods to contain human-wildlife conflicts, the wildlife department should be looking at other ways of dealing with such incidents including translocation of these wild animals in conflict, away from human habitation and/or rehabilitating them for later release into the wild. They should also be learning from their counterparts in other countries.

We urge the government to investigate into this matter and put a stop to such cruel methods of culling wildlife. The government should also ensure that our forests are protected so that wildlife habitats are not destroyed. This is the most efficient way to protect both the diversity of wildlife in the country and human life.

Meenakshi Raman
President
Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM)